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ABSTRACT

A study worked with three groups of female students to determine whether using the Career Orientation and Planning Profile (COPP) and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) would enable adults to make better career choices the second time around. The students were women in the Access to Careers and Training (ACT) program for unemployed or underemployed individuals currently receiving or eligible for Aid to Families with Dependent Children. The three groups were a capital city population of 15, an urban population of 10, and a rural population of 12 ACT participants. The capital city group completed only the COPP, the rural population only the MBTI, and the urban group both. The hypothesis was that one of the three procedures would produce a more complete set of plans and identify a more positive attitude toward job seeking and job finding. Data from the three groups were analyzed by comparing the original career choice to the final choice of each participant. Findings seemed to indicate that the treatment that made the most difference was the COPP by itself. Recommendations were as follows: a training session on how to administer and interpret the COPP; more time for the COPP and MBTI; more appropriate matching of the groups; and development of a program including the COPP and MBTI. (Participant comment and a summary of COPP work with adults are appended.) (YLB)

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Using the Career Orientation and Planning Profile (COPP) and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) to Strengthen Adult Students' Knowledge of Self and of the Work World

A paper prepared for presentation
to the AVA Guidance Division

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Using the Career Orientation and Planning Profile (COPP) and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) to Strengthen Adult Students' Knowledge of Self and of the Work World

Introduction

The *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (MBTI) and the *Career Orientation and Planning Profile* (COPP) are two compatible assessment instruments that have a great deal in common. The following attributes describe some of the commonalities of both instruments.

1. Each can be administered in a classroom setting,
2. Each can be-self scored within the classroom setting and results can be immediately applied.
3. Each has a large data base and has been or is being well standardized in both the United States and in Japan,
4. Each assessment instrument yields information that is non-threatening and immediately useful as the student or client plans his or her career path.
5. Each instrument has the clear objective of assisting students in their understanding of themselves and how they relate to others and to the world of work.
6. Each instrument has a number of references to the occupations that are listed in the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* (DOT) produced by the U.S. Department of Labor.

The Presenting Problem

In the Spring of 1992, the unemployment rate in New Hampshire was one of the highest in the nation. A number of programs were implemented to encourage unemployed individuals to seek employment in occupations that they may not have considered previous to their current unemployment. One of these programs titled: "Access to Careers and Training" (ACT) is co-sponsored and co-funded by the New Hampshire Division of Human Services and by the New Hampshire Job Training Council. This important training program is designed for individuals. mostly women, who are not, but could be or will be, eligible for Jobs Training Partnership Act (JTPA) Programs.

Currently the *Career Orientation and Planning Profile* is being field tested on middle/junior high school students, high school students, and secondary vocational education students. This study began to look at an adult population with the implication that it is never too late to identify one's life/career goals. Working with three groups of ACT students, all of whom were women, the research design intended to determine whether using the *Career Orientation and Planning Profile* (COPP) and the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (MBTI) would enable adults to make better career choices the second time around.

The COPP

The *Career Orientation and Planning Profile* (COPP) (Drier, et. al. 1991)has been adapted from The Fukuyama Profile (Fukuyama, S. 1988) which was originally developed and widely used in Japan after World War II. The COPP, field tested in the United States in 1991 - 1992, is designed to help students and adults to appraise three factors that determine the ability to select a career/occupational choice in a methodical manner.

The process of making a sound career decision consists of: 1) an analysis of one's own personality attributes that relate to an occupation; 2) an analysis of the occupational requirements and opportunities; and 3) the ability to obtain suitable exploratory experiences through occupational tryouts. A profile is derived from five indices and is a representation of the student's/client's ability to systematically pursue his or her career interests.

The COPP can be used to teach knowledge about occupations and to show students/clients which specific occupations match their interests and other personality attributes. The COPP uses the student's/client's past experiences in the area of the occupation under consideration as a way to measure future success in that occupation.

The MBTI

The merit of the theory underlying the MBTI (Myers, I. B. 1991) is that it enables us to expect specific differences in people and to cope with the people and their differences more constructively than we otherwise could. Briefly, the theory is that much seemingly chance variation in human behavior is not due to chance; it is in fact the logical result of a few basic, observable preferences.

These preferences have been validated over a number of years by sampling a variety of people in a variety of occupations. The resulting *Atlas of Type Tables* gives a number of these occupations in a format that can be compared with individual's occupational choices and may be used as a predictor of work satisfaction.

The basic assumption when using the MBTI in career counseling is that one of the most important motivations for career choice is a desire for work that is intrinsically interesting and satisfying. No occupation provides a perfect match between type preferences and work tasks, but good occupational choices can prevent mismatches.

Clients should never be discouraged from entering an occupation on the basis that they are "not the type." If that occupation, however, is seldom chosen by people that are not their type, it is prudent for them to investigate their chosen occupation carefully. Being in a situation of *consciously chosen* difference can be very positive and may bring new and valuable viewpoints to that occupation.

Isabel Myers, one of the creators of the MBTI, has identified work expectations for each preference:

Extraverts: Work that interacts with a succession of people, or with activity outside the office or away from the desk.
Introverts: Work that permits some solitude and time for concentration.
Sensing types: Work that requires attention to detail and careful observation.
Intuitive types: Work that requires a succession of new problems to be solved.
Thinking types: Work that requires logical order, especially with ideas, numbers, or physical objects.
Feeling types: Work that provides service to people and a harmonious and appreciative work environment.
Judging (decisive) types: Work that imposes a need for system and order.
Perceptive types: Work that requires adapting to changing situations, or where understanding situations is more important than managing them.

Description of Test Population

To be eligible for the ACT program, candidates needed to be unemployed or underemployed and currently receiving or eligible for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). They needed to be available to attend classes for five hours a day, four days a week for six weeks. As they moved through the program, their instructor (in all three situations, a social worker) created a safe and caring atmosphere within which they explored their own self esteem as well as the world of work. The groups were similar in that they understood that, once committed to the program, they were required to attend, they were expected to participate in all of the events presented to them, and that, at the end of the six weeks program, they would graduate with a completely developed, implementable career plan.

Although three groups were identified, there were two program leaders; groups one and two had the same leader.

1. A capital city population of fifteen ACT program participants, henceforth referred to as ACT I.

2. An urban population of ten ACT program participants, henceforth referred to as ACT II.

3. A rural population of twelve ACT program participants, henceforth referred to as ACT III.

Procedures

The *Career Orientation and Planning Profile* (COPP) and the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (MBTI) were administered in different combinations over a period of two three-hour sessions each to three adult populations, all women, who were targeted for employment. One population of 15 women (ACT I), took the COPP; a second population of 10 women (ACT II), both the COPP and the MBTI; and a third population of 12 women (ACT III), the MBTI. Every effort was made to match these populations in age, sociological background, family circumstances, etc. However, due to the vageries of the admissions guidelines, there was a substantial difference among these factors.

The premises, or hypotheses, of this research are that one of the three procedures would (a) produce a more complete set of plans as evidenced by the entries on "My Career Planner" (or on the planning instrument developed by the ACT Program), and (b) identify a more positive attitude towards job seeking and job finding on the part of the participants through their identification of a specific set of outcomes.

Each instrument, the COPP and the MBTI, is an interactive, self-scoring, user-friendly procedure that yields instantly useful results. Each participant had an opportunity to integrate the results with other information and experiences that she had assembled including but not limited to current labor market information.

Administration

During the second week of each six week program, the researcher attended the class for at least a half day, administered, then assisted with the scoring and interpretion of the instrument(s). The leader then attempted to standardize the procedures. However, since each group received a different mix of instruments, this was a little difficult.

1. ACT I, the capital city population received only the COPP.

2. ACT II, the urban population, received the COPP and the MBTI.

3. ACT III, the rural population, received only the MBTI.

All three groups also received copies of the "Career Planner" and "Career Portfolio", instruments that enable participants to record all career information gleaned throughout their ACT Program.

All participants had received a battery of standardized tests including achievement, aptitude and interest. Yet they enthusiatically participated in the COPP and/or the MBTI. The researcher has every reason to believe that the results from these groups can be entered into any adult population data bank that is being or will be generated by the COPP developer.

Although the COPP has an accompanying Career Planner and Career Portfolio, the ACT Program has its own Career Planning instrument which resembles an application for employment or college. As it turns out, most of the students' plans included further education; those plans not only included a college application but also a financial aid application. The ACT Plan is drawn up by the student with the assistance of the program facilitator and presented to a panel which includes persons representing agencies that will continue to financially sponsor the students. Depending upon the contents of the plan, agencies represented on this panel included the Division of Human Services, the Department of Labor, the Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in New Hampshire.

Interpretation of Results

The data resulting from the three populations was analyzed by comparing the original choice to the final choice of each participant. With the assistance of a graduate student who works with the Veterans Administration and and is an expert in data analysis and interpretation, the original and final categories of occupational choices were classified according to general theme scales using Holland's Typology: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional. See Chart, Appendix B. The following chart is the result of comparing the initial and final theme choices.

	ACT I	ACT II	ACT III
Realistic	1--2		0--1
Investigative	3--2	1--1	2--1
Artistic	3--2	1--0	
Social	4--5	6--5	4--3
Enterprising	1--1		
Conventional	3--3	2--4	6--7
Total Participants	15	10	12

The percent of the three populations changing occupational preferences reflective of the different themes are as follows: ACT I: 53%, ACT II: 30%, and ACT III: 25%.

Conclusions

From this limited data, one might speculate that the treatment that made the most difference is the COPP by itself, the application in ACT I. Although it may not be appropriate to make this assumption based upon such small populations in each group, the results do indicate that the COPP in and of itself did make a difference (53%) between the original choice and the choice of occupational training the participants entered at completion of the ACT Program. Although change for the sake of change is not necessarily good, this researcher's interpretation is that, where change did occur between occupational themes, the final selections made by the participants were more appropriate than the original selection.

The research was performed on a very small population (N = 37). Although the three groups were quite similar in their needs and backgrounds, they differed greatly in demographic location and access to specific training opportunities. In the case of ACT III (N = 12), for example, because the participants had limited transportation, the avalability of training opportunities was quite narrow.

The researcher requested written feedback from the three separate groups about the COPP and MBTI instruments. This feedback is provided in narrative format in Appendix A.

Summary and Recommendations

A training session on how to administer and interpret the COPP needs to be available to the program facilitators, the instructors of the ACT or similar programs. The instructors should be the administrators and interpreters of the instruments, so they can own the process, integrate it into the entire process, and carry through with the planning documents.

More time needs to be taken with the COPP and the MBTI. With so much else going on, there was a great deal of stress to squeeze the instruments into the classes.

The groups need to be matched more appropriately. The researcher speculates that the results would be different if the three treatments were applied to matched urban or matched rural populations where the training opportunities were more comparable.

Although most students who took the COPP found it very helpful (see comments, Appendix A) some of the items were confusing and needed a great deal of dialogue. The researcher understands that this has been attended to and that a machine-scorable version is now available.

This researcher recommends that a complete program including the newly revised and completely standardized COPP and the standard MBTI certification program be developed and incorporated into a combined training program for adults who are reentering the job market or are entering the job market at a nontraditional age level. Although further research needs to be conducted on AFDC adults, other adult populations need to be able to take advantage of the combination of these two instruments.

Finally, if the results of this research can be extrapolated to other adult populations, the COPP by itself can be used to address the career planning needs of similar adult groups or individuals. The COPP has been developed as a relatively inexpensive, complete package to administer and to interpret. The assessment instruments (Forms A and B and the Summary Profile) are accompanied by a Career Planner with its own Student Guidebook and a Career Portfolio. The assessment instruments can be hand-scored or machine-scored and become the property of the adult who is in the process of developing a career plan.

New Research in 1995

The researcher has continued to work with adult populations, and has become particularly interested in the Adult Tutorial population of the Adult Basic Education Program (ABE). In this study, we are asking each tutor to take the COPP and then to administer the COPP to their student. In at least one situation the student read below the third grade reading level; the tutor worked through the COPP reading to the student whose comprehension level was about fifth grade. Together they made it work. Although it is very early in this experience and there have been many stops and starts, the COPP appears to be a useful instrument in assisting this population to develop self esteem at the same time that they are learning to read, write, compute and job hunt. This researcher is still working with the tutors and their students and hopes to continue. As appendix C will indicate, there is still much to do.

Six students enrolled in a summer Career Counseling graduate class also selected adults to take the COPP. Once again self esteem appears to be a most valuable gain in the process. Like the ABE tutors and their students, the process of determining work that they have accomplished, their ability to know themselves, and the opportunity to learn more about a career or career cluster - the process parts of the COPP - far outweigh the product, the results. In each of these populations, those who took the COPP were much more interested in the process than in the results.

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Appendix A

Participants' Comments

Describe how you will use the information and interactions from this workshop in your life/career.

ACT I Career Orientation and Planning Profille (COPP) only (15 women)

- It puts everything in front of your eyes.
- It helped pick out skills we have that we take for granted
- Showed that I was not only interested in my chosen career, but also qualified.
- Helped cement career plan.
- I will weigh things out, separate items in the columns, would research, then go for it.
- I will use the *Career Portfolio* to keep information I need for work and/or school.
- The *Career Portfolio* will be useful in a career search.
- I am already using some skills exercises to search out my career choice.
- I will use it as a guide for future decisions on the jobs or careers I choose.
- It would be a good source to go back to with more input and information.
- It helped me decide what steps I need to take in order to complete my education and be successful in my career.

ACT II Career Orientation and Planning Profile (COPP) and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) (10 women

- This program provided me with information that will be like a tool to me.
- I know where my strenghts lie and what I am capable of achieving in my future goals.
- These indicators made me understand myself a little better.
- If I choose to change my career, I will definitely go back to this information.
- I have learned how to use my transferable skills in my schooling ad also at my job goal.
- Use them for my future plans in college or work.
- They were very helpful in how well you know yourself.
- I found it to be very useful as far as what interests, abilities and values I have and how to apply it towards the career of my choice to help me grow and be the best employee I can.
- I will use them in my career, because this showed me that I can do what I thought was impossible.
- I will use the information for my abilities to further my life dealing with work.
- I know my values and interests.

ACT III Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) (12 women)

- Found out what my interests are in the medical field.
- Helped me and gave me the hope and encouragement for my life and career.
- Remember to keep asking questions and find the information you need to follow through on anything..
- I [used] this information to find out where my interests were and what kind of person I am, which will be useful throughout my whole life.
- I am going to go to MacIntosh College for a year in office management.
- The information stimulates good conversation amongst the students about self-awareness.
- A good tool to look at one's own self and how this plays into our decisions.
- Going on to college and making better choices. Knowing the information will make the choices easier.
- I will use all information when planning my career.
- I feel better about myself and I found it useful using it as a group.
- I will go to college and get more schooling.
- I'm going to find the job career that I talked about.
- They helped me decide what kind of a career I want and what I have to do to get started in that career.
- It was all useful. I can use any type of information on careers.

Summary of COPP Work with Adults - Jo Hayslip - December 2, 1995

1. Three different populations - all very small

1. 25 women in Access to Careers and Training Program (ACT) - Summer 1992
2. 12 Adult Basic Education (ABE) participants, 6 tutors and 6 students - Summer 1995
3. 6 Adult students identified by Career Counseling (CC) class members - Summer 1995

2. Differences:

- Researcher personally administered the COPP to the ACT group in 1992.
- Researcher taught the ABE and CC groups to administer the COPP to their adult participants in 1995.
- ACT and ABE groups can be classified as disadvantaged. CC was not.
- ACT groups used early version (hand-scored); ABE and CC groups used machine scored version (which was hand scored by researcher.)
- ACT groups significantly changed their career goals See worksheets - Attachment 1. Although they generally stayed in the career cluster, their career choice appeared to be more realistic.

ABE group has not yet done enough follow-up with their tutors to determine whether their career choices are realistic.

In all but one instance, the CC group reported that the COPP helped to validate a career choice that they had already made. The one different individual put herself back onto a career exploration path.

3. Similarities

- Most of the adults reported that they learned a process for career decision-making that, whether augmented by other instruments or not, was helpful in making appropriate career decisions.
- Most of the adults described that they felt validated by the job analysis factors. Participants became much more aware of jobs that they had done in and out of school that were meaningful and valuable.
- Most of the adults described that they also felt validated by the self-analysis factor; they reported that another person, the peer evaluator, believing in them was helpful to their self-esteem.
- All of the adults reported that the process was more important than the product.

Outcomes and recommendations

- Adults need reading and comprehension abilities above the third grade level. Many of the ABE adults that the tutors tried to work with became discouraged by the vocabulary and refused to complete the instrument.
- ABE tutors who did successfully work with their students did the work as an add-on instead of an integrative activity. The COPP needs to be seen as an integral part of a program and not an add-on.
- The COPP needs to continue to be researched with a variety of adults in a variety of settings.
- The COPP has a great deal of potential for working with disadvantaged adults - a population that is frequently overlooked in norming groups.